

## ON THE LANGUAGE OF THE NATCHEZ.

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Of all the native tribes inhabiting the Lower Mississippi, by the common consent of the early travelers the Natchez or Nache were the most civilized. They were located ten or twelve miles below the site of the city which now bears their name, and formed a community of five or eight villages, each ruled despotically by a hereditary chief called a Sun, themselves in subjection to a head Chief, the Great Sun, whose power was absolute over both the life and property of his subjects. In this respect they differed entirely from the tribes around them, whose Chiefs were elective and limited in their control.

The Nache furthermore had unusual skill in the arts, weaving a textile fabric of the inner bark of the mulberry tree, with which they clothed themselves, and displayed in the construction of their dwellings and temples, and in their mode of worship, more developed ideas than their neighbors. They were accustomed to build artificial mounds, to sacrifice slaves and children at their religious ceremonies, to maintain a perpetual fire in their temples, and avowedly to worship the Sun. The only nation with whom they claimed relationship, and who are said to have spoken the same language, were the Taensas, a small tribe near the river, twelve or fifteen leagues above them. This nation disappeared shortly after the settlement of the country, uniting with the Tonicas, who seem to have been also a related people.\*

The numerical strength of the Nache is very differently given by the various early authorities, the maximum being 200,000 ! More sober statements justify us in putting the number of fighting men in the whole nation at about 800 or even 500.

The origin or meaning of the name Nache is uncertain, and neither the Mâskoke or Creeks, nor the remnants of the tribe yet living can give any explanation of it. The former call them simply Nache or Nachvlke (the Nache people.) They have been known at times as the Apple or White Apple Indians, the Apple being the translation given the name of their principal village by the French. This village was twelve miles south of the present City of Natchez, three miles from the Mississippi, on Second Creek, and five miles from the French Fort, Rosalie. As early as 1699, D'Iberville speaks of them as "the Natchez or Tpelois," the latter word, properly Vpelois, being from vpe, meaning apple, or some such kind of fruit.

The attention which this nation has attracted from many writers interested in American Ethnology, and their hitherto unknown affiliations, have induced me to collect from various published and unpublished sources whatever can throw light on their relationship, and also to obtain

\* See Penicaut, *Annals of Louisiana*, pp. 125-6 ; and Charlevoix, *Journal Historique*, p. 433.

from representatives of the tribe still living an accurate vocabulary of their language, illustrating its grammar as well as its word-forms.

This latter had been very insufficiently done by previous writers. In the early French accounts, while we have many and ample descriptions of their villages, temples, ceremonies, government, arts and appearance, not a dozen words of their tongue can be found. Albert Gallatin published a short and imperfect vocabulary, which he obtained from a Nache Chief in Washington, and this, so far, has been the only source of information about the tongue. It was so meagre that no dependable conclusions could be derived from its study.

As a nation the Nache disappeared in 1730. They were the first to recognize the danger to the native population of the advent of the whites, and the first to resist their encroachments. They were also the first to suffer the inevitable destruction doomed ere many generations to overtake their whole race. The brief annals of their historical existence do not embrace half a century, and such as they are I append them, inserting references to the visits of those writers who have described them.

1682. March 26th.—The Chevalier de la Salle plants a cross at the Nache town of the Apple.

1699. Visit of M. de St. Côme and Father Francois Joliet de Montigny. The letters of both have been published by Mr. J. G. Shea.

1700. March 5th.—They conclude a treaty of peace with M. Le Moyne d'Iberville (Penicaut, *Annals of Louisiana*, p. 57).

November.—Visited by Father Gravier, whose letter has also been published by Mr. Shea.

1703. December.—Visited by M. Penicaut, with a war party sent out by M. de Bienville (*Annals*, p. 83).

1707. In company with the Biloxis and Pascagoulas they attack and nearly destroy the Chetimachas.

1716. "First war" with the Nache. They murder some French traders, and M. de Bienville marches against them to compel them to punish the murderers. Their warriors at this time estimated at 800. Fort Rosalie is constructed, finished August 5th. (See M. de Richebourg, *La Première Guerre des Natchez*, and Penicaut, *Annals*, pp. 131-3, both in French's *Hist. Colls. of Louisiana*).

1720. January 5th.—M. Le Page du Pratz, an intelligent young Frenchman, starts a plantation near the Nache towns. He subsequently writes a *Histoire de la Louisiane* (Paris, 1758), containing many particulars about the tribe.

1721. December.—Visit of the Jesuit Father Charlevoix, who records minutely his impressions in his *Journal Historique*, pp. 420-427.

1723. November.—Second war of the Nache (called by Du Pratz, the First.) Bienville with 700 (?) men attacks the village of the Apple.

1725. Death of the Great Sun, Olabalkebiche, the Stung Serpent.

1728. Fathers Poison and Le Petit undertake to convert them, but with indifferent success. A long descriptive letter of the latter in the *Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses*, Vol. IV.

1729. November 28th.—The Nache attack and massacre the French residents, incited thereto by the demand of the commandant of Fort Rosalie, that they should forthwith vacate the village of the Apple, as he wanted the ground for his own purposes.

1730. January 27th.—They are attacked by the Choctaws, allies of the French.

February.—They are attacked by the French, their villages destroyed, and more than half their number either killed or taken prisoner. The captives were taken to New Orleans, where the women were put to work on the Government plantations. The men, including the Great Sun, were sold into slavery and shipped to St. Domingo to work in the mines, where they soon perished.

The remainder of the nation escaped across the Mississippi and fled up the Red River to a spot about six miles below the Nachitoches town, "near the river, by the side of a lake of clear water, still known as the Natchez lake, where they erected a mound of considerable size, which still remains."\* Here they were attacked shortly afterwards by the French and the Nachitoches, under the command of M. de St. Denis. Many were killed, a number were driven into the lake and drowned, while the wretched remnant fled to the Chicasa and Creek towns. Although they have continued to speak their own tongue, they have never since attempted any separate organization.

The Nache language was described by the Le Page du Pratz as "easy in pronunciation and expressive in terms." He pretended to considerable familiarity with it, remarking in his chapter on the subject, "I readily learned the peculiar language of the natives." This we must accept with a very large allowance. The Nache, like most Indian tongues, is enormously difficult to a European, and all that M. du Pratz knew of it was probably little more than the current trader's jargon.

He is, I believe, the only author, however, who notes the different modes of speech in use in addressing persons of rank, and those of inferior position. His words in reference to it have been construed to mean that two languages were in vogue. This is not his statement. Indeed he is careful to guard against such an impression. He says, speaking of the dialectical differences between the Suns and the Commoners: "The two language are nearly the same; the difference of expression seems only to take place in matters relating to the persons of the Suns and Nobles, in distinction from those of the people."

The examples he gives, explain this at first sight singular anomaly. They are imperative or salutatory verbal forms. Now there are two

\* Dr. John Sibley, in the *American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, Vol. I., p. 724. Dumont, *Mems. Hist. sur la Louisiane*, Tome. II., pp. 192, 193, 295.

forms in the Mäskoke and some other Indian tongues in these modes, "the one used toward superiors indicating respect or veneration, the other toward an inferior as a servant or a child."\* This peculiarity, probably developed in more positive features by a despotic government, constituted no doubt the difference observed by Du Pratz.

The vocabulary, which I now present, was prepared very carefully at my request by Mrs. A. E. W. Robertson, of the Tallahassee Mission, a most competent linguist, familiar with the Mäskoke by practical use. It was obtained from Mr. Leslie, a pure-blood Nache. As he was unacquainted with English the Mäskoke was employed as the medium, and the sounds are given in the alphabet of that language. This contains thirteen consonants and six vowels. The vowel sound of a in *fate*, the th, and the consonants b, c, d, g, j, r, q, v, x, and z, are wanting. The r is introduced to represent an aspirated l, as hl or 'l. The c is pronounced as tch in *wretch*. The w is always soft as in *weak*. The vowel sounds are a as in *fat*; e as in *me*; i as in *pine*; o as in *note*; u as in *rule*. The v is the neutral vowel, and is strictly ä short, as in *vocal*. In comparing the words with others in the Mäskoke dialects, I have, however, substituted for the c the ch, and for the r the aspirated 'l. The kw of the Nache is pronounced as the English qu. The sh is always a combination, except in es-hok and pus-hylles.

I have incorporated Gallatin's vocabulary, retaining his orthography, and indicating words from that source by adding after them the letter G.

|                   |                                   |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Again             | hvmv                              |
| All               | lvtvse, latakop, G.               |
| ant               | wě'le                             |
| apple (big-peach) | vpesurer                          |
| arm               | a'hvly, ish, G.                   |
| ax                | iyvmk, ohyaminoo, G.              |
| arrow             | eshakwo, G.                       |
| Back              | u'sus                             |
| "    lower part   | okeo'en                           |
| bad               | wvtvks, or mesmeskep, wattaks, G. |
| ball              | puhshv                            |
| beans             | popkě                             |
| bed               | pě'tkup                           |
| bedstead          | ha'pvtv'yv                        |
| bible (big book)  | a'tolser                          |
| bird              | sorkor, shankolt, G.              |
| "    young        | sokolenn'                         |
| black             | eokokuph, tsokokop, G.            |
| blackberry        | onu                               |
| blue              | haähsep, haasip, G.               |
| book              | a'tol                             |

\*Buckner, *Grammar of the Mäskoke Lang.*, p. 77. I am informed that Mr. Buckner's explanation is not quite correct, but the fact is substantially as stated.

|                 |                                      |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
| boy             | kvpena'nu, tamunoonoo, G.            |
| “ small         | tvmhkve'nanu                         |
| bread           | pěhě'lu, beheloo, G.                 |
| breath          | heleksě'nēs                          |
| bear            | tsokohp, G.                          |
| blood           | itsch, G.                            |
| boat            | kwagtolt, G.                         |
| body            | iwit, G.                             |
| bone            | ikwel, G.                            |
| brother         | kakanesha, G.                        |
| buffalo         | wastanem, G.                         |
| Cabbage         | ki                                   |
| cake            | pěhě'lu evkv'lgup (globular bread)   |
| cat             | wenvtu                               |
| “ young         | wenvte'nu                            |
| chair           | cu'speděl                            |
| chicken         | kvbahtev'                            |
| “ young         | kvbahte'nu                           |
| chief           | cu'nv, tarnwap, G.                   |
| chin            | unkwvyv                              |
| circular        | lutumkuph                            |
| clean           | kahve'v                              |
| corn            | ha'kuyv, hokko, G.                   |
| cow             | wvstan                               |
| “ calf          | wvstauenu                            |
| cylindrical     | lutugv                               |
| child           | tsitsie, G.                          |
| cold            | tzitakopana, G.                      |
| Day             | we'tv, wit, G.                       |
| deer            | ca', tza, G.                         |
| “ young         | caye'nu                              |
| dog             | wvskup, waskkop, G.                  |
| “ young         | wvskupenu                            |
| dress, (a)      | pv'evlv                              |
| daughter        | mahnoonoo, G.                        |
| Ear             | ě'puk, ipok, G.                      |
| east            | kwahsep, kakunef                     |
| eye             | oktur, oktool, G.                    |
| earth (or land) | wihih                                |
| Fire            | u'wvh, wah, G.                       |
| flowers         | kvhvělu'se                           |
| foot            | a'tv                                 |
| “ broad part of | atpě'sev, hatpeshè, <i>feet</i> , G. |
| frog            | ěcakst                               |
| father          | abishnisha, G.                       |

|                          |                         |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| fish                     | henn, G.                |
| friend, my               | ketanesoo, G.           |
| Ginseng (white medicuie) | omkvhap                 |
| girl, large              | horv                    |
| “ little                 | hole'nu, hohlenoo, G.   |
| good                     | sokonen, sokone, G.     |
| grass                    | ē'wēl, ohwell, G.       |
| grasshopper              | shela'tkēha             |
| green                    | poökup, chwellhayah, G. |
| God                      | aleksandiste tza, G.    |
| Hair, or leaves          | tōyv                    |
| “ (of the head)          | ē'dēn, etene, G.        |
| hand                     | ē'sv                    |
| “ the palm               | ēspē'hsēv, ispeshe, G.  |
| handkerchief             | shemhawes               |
| “ large                  | shemhawesker            |
| head                     | a'puyv, apoo, G.        |
| heel                     | atv'ntev                |
| high                     | es'hvk                  |
| hog                      | kwē'hser                |
| “ young                  | kwēhsele'nu             |
| horse                    | wvskupser               |
| “ young                  | wvskupsele'nu           |
| house                    | ē'dv, hahit, G.         |
| heart                    | oontza, G.              |
| hill                     | kweya, G.               |
| hat                      | wahiloohie, G.          |
| husband                  | tamahl nesoo, G.        |
| Indian, red man          | tvmh-pakup, tapakop, G. |
| infant                   | se'ce                   |
| ice                      | koowatanul, G.          |
| King, or chief           | cu'nv                   |
| kneepan                  | oksuyv                  |
| knife                    | pilhēwes, pyhewish, G.  |
| Lake                     | a'hvyv                  |
| large                    | lēkep, lehkip, G.       |
| leg, lower part          | atka'hkvr               |
| “ calf of                | atwen'cev               |
| life (breath)            | heleksē'nēs             |
| lips                     | e'hecer                 |
| lizard                   | sakulecvvt              |
| “ blue-tailed            | ehpapv                  |
| leaf                     | tasiatoll, G.           |
| lightning                | pooloopooloonul, G.     |

|                     |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Male                | kvpe'nv                      |
| man                 | tvnh'kvpena', tomhukpena, G. |
| many                | tvlu'en, pookoseh, G.        |
| meat                | wen'cev, wintse, G.          |
| medicine            | omv                          |
| money               | nvrkv'tuho'p                 |
| moon (white Suu)    | kwa'hsep kvha'p, kwasip, G.  |
| morning             | tuwa'cen                     |
| mouth               | e'heyv, heche, G.            |
| muskmelon           | yeweskmvtvk                  |
| mother              | kwalneshoo, G.               |
| Needle              | a'tul                        |
| negro               | cokonuh                      |
| night               | mvyukuph, toowa, G.          |
| north               | cetakuph                     |
| nose                | la'mve, shamats, G.          |
| no                  | kooshats, G.                 |
| Oak                 | tssoelekep, G.               |
| old                 | tapsel, G.                   |
| Pants               | okvphv'sku                   |
| peach               | vpesur                       |
| person              | tvmlh                        |
| "    young          | tv'myv                       |
| piebald             | kvsah'tēp                    |
| pillow              | hě'sunts                     |
| pipe                | hakhesk                      |
| place               | luhu                         |
| plum                | ahtvpesur                    |
| potato              | vcv                          |
| pumpkin             | yewe'skvyv                   |
| pine tree           | tsohl, G.                    |
| Quickly             | somōl                        |
| Rain                | nvsv, nasnayobik, G.         |
| rib                 | kutvpker                     |
| river (large water) | kulnsher, wōl, G.            |
| rock                | o'fvh                        |
| red                 | pahkop, G.                   |
| Saddle              | pětkupes                     |
| salt                | wih                          |
| scissors            | hvpha'wes                    |
| sea                 | wa'rv, kootshel, G.          |
| "    large          | warsher                      |
| shirt               | pofhesku                     |
| shoes               | pupvce, popatse, G.          |
| short               | mocmookup                    |

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| small                        | cekeskap, (pl) cekestanu (sing) tsikistik-tenoo, G. |
| snake                        | u'lv, woollah, G.                                   |
| snow                         | rowiyv, kowa, G.                                    |
| soap                         | keneahvles  |
| sour                         | kvyumhkuph  |
| south (warm place)           | lvmevstek   |
| spherical                    | popupkup  |
| stars                        | tuku'r, tookul, G.                                  |
| stockings                    | ho'steahaves  |
| stove                        | uwvh-luhu   |
| straight                     | svpupkup  |
| sugar                        | owih  |
| sun                          | kwahsep, wahsil, G.                                 |
| sweet                        | cvkvlguph   |
| sister, my                   | aluwueh, nesoo, G.                                  |
| sky                          | nasookta, G.  |
| son                          | akwalnesuta, G.                                     |
| spring                       | amekone, G.   |
| stone                        | ohk, G.   |
| summer                       | amehika, G.   |
| Table                        | kenhv'skushvpt                                      |
| tall, or long                | wvtakuph, <i>or</i> wvtvntakuph                     |
| teeth                        | e'ntv, int ( <i>tooth</i> ), G.                     |
| thigh                        | a'nkwwyv  |
| toad                         | waskv'lkul  |
| tobacco                      | hakvu, hakshoo, G.                                  |
| "    pipe                    | hakhesk   |
| to-day                       | kawet   |
| tree                         | cuyv, tshoo, G.                                     |
| turkey                       | sokorser  |
| "    young                   | sokorselelu   |
| turnip (large cabbage)       | ki'ansher   |
| town                         | walt, G.  |
| Valley                       | patkop, G.  |
| Wagon                        | etu'tukup   |
| water                        | kuhn, koon, G.                                      |
| watermelon                   | yeweskvyap  |
| well! (interject. of assent) | makup <i>or</i> makupiyu                            |
| white                        | kahap, hahap, G                                     |
| white man                    | royokup   |
| wicked (person)              | tvmhtvma'te   |
| wild (of animals)            | tvmhkoyugo  |
| wisdom                       | helbuuvles  |
| woman                        | tvmar, tahmahl, G.                                  |
| "    young (girl)            | tvmalenu  |



|                 |                     |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| warrior         | kaastshel, G.       |
| wife            | stepe nesoo, G.     |
| winter          | kwithitsetakop, G.  |
| wolf            | uttuwah, G.         |
| wood            | tshootop, G.        |
| Yellow          | hahiahop, G.        |
| yes             | mahkoop, G.         |
| young           | tapkoppinali, G.    |
| I               | tugēha, takehah, G. |
| thou            | uhkehah, G.         |
| Ive (this here) | akoonikia, G.       |
| we              | tukahanehi, G.      |

## NUMERALS.

|              |                          |                   |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| One          | we'tan                   | witahu, G.        |
| two          | a'wete                   | ahwetic, G.       |
| three        | ne'de                    | nayetic, G.       |
| four         | tenv'wete                | ganooetic, G.     |
| five         | spē'de                   | shpedee, G.       |
| six          | la'hvuvf                 | lahono, G.        |
| seven        | un'hkwv                  | ukwoh, G.         |
| eight        | v'pkvtepes               | upkutepish, G.    |
| nine         | wete'pkvtepes            | wedipkatepish, G. |
| ten          | ogu                      | ōkwah, G.         |
| eleven       | ogu wetan kou'se         |                   |
| twelve       | ogu āwete kou'se         |                   |
| thirteen     | ogu nē'de kou'se         |                   |
| fourteen     | ogu tenv'wete kou'se     |                   |
| fifteen      | ogu spēde kou'se         |                   |
| sixteen      | ogu la'hvuvf kou'se      |                   |
| seventeen    | ogu vnhkwvk ou'se        |                   |
| eighteen     | ogu vpkvtepeskou'se      |                   |
| nineteen     | ogu wetep kvtepes kou'se |                   |
| twenty       | ogaphv                   | okapoo G.         |
| twenty-one   | ogaph wetan kou'se       |                   |
| thirty       | ok nē'de                 |                   |
| forty        | ok kenvf                 |                   |
| fifty        | ok spēde                 |                   |
| sixty        | ok la hvuvf              |                   |
| seventy      | ok vn h kwv              |                   |
| eighty       | ok vpk vtepes            |                   |
| ninety       | ok wete pk vtepes        |                   |
| one hundred  | pu pu we'tan             | poopwitahu, G.    |
| two hundred  | pupu a'we'te             |                   |
| one thousand | puputmse we'tan          | pooptalshel, G.   |
| one million  | pupu tvmsr we'tan        |                   |

## VERBAL FORMS.

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| To see           | erhvlles   |
| to write         | pushvlles  |
| to die           | hawvteēs ( <i>sing.</i> ), wewvteēkek ( <i>pl.</i> )                       |
| to kill          | tahanks ( <i>sing. obj.</i> ), wewvthvlles ( <i>pl. obj.</i> ), appawe, G. |
| to hear          | eplevlles  |
| to lift          | hēkērhvlles.   |
| to sweep         | pērhvlles  |
| to wash          | cuahvlles ( <i>see soap</i> ).   |
| to cleanse       | kahhvlles ( <i>see clean</i> ).  |
| to blacken       | cokohvlles ( <i>see black</i> ).   |
| to sit           | hē'ces ( <i>sing.</i> ), hētukes ( <i>pl.</i> ).                           |
| to stand         | cashvkes ( <i>sing. and pl.</i> ).   |
| to come          | kahvsahkus ( <i>sing.</i> ), hvhapesahkus ( <i>pl.</i> ).                  |
| to run           | kwvrhēs kus ( <i>sing.</i> ), hēkērhvkes ( <i>pl.</i> ), kwalneskoop, G.   |
| to be lost       | wvthvkes ( <i>sing.</i> ), wvtvthvkes ( <i>pl.</i> )                       |
| to be about      | lv'petes ( <i>s.</i> ); hvpe'kses ( <i>dual</i> ); wehvkes ( <i>pl.</i> )  |
| to go            | hahtes ( <i>s.</i> ); haksēs ( <i>ā.</i> ); pēhēgus ( <i>pl.</i> )         |
| to have come (?) | hvēhtek ( <i>s.</i> ); hvēksek ( <i>d.</i> ); kvpečkuk ( <i>pl.</i> )      |
| to lie down      | lv'ces ( <i>s.</i> ); hvtv'nces ( <i>d.</i> ); hvlvhv'ces ( <i>pl.</i> ).  |
| to eat           | kenlvskus, kimposko, G.  |
| to drink         | pokoo, G.  |
| to sleep         | nanole, G.   |
| to walk          | naktek, G.   |

## INDICATIVE FORMS.

|                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| I want                | tēgusa                    |
| thou wantest          | pēnēgusa                  |
| he wants              | nēgusa                    |
| we two want           | tētēnēgusa                |
| we want               | tēpēgusa                  |
| we all want           | lvtvse tēpēgusa           |
| you want              | pēmpēgusa                 |
| they want             | nēpēgusa                  |
| dost thou want?       | pēnēguse?                 |
| do ye want?           | pēmpēguse?                |
| do ye all want?       | lvtvse pēmpēguse?         |
| what dost thou want?  | kōs pēnēguse?             |
| do you want water?    | kuhn pēnēguse?            |
| I want to eat         | kenlvskus tēgusa          |
| I want to eat bread   | pēhēlu hvskus tēgusa      |
| do you want to go     | hahtēs pēnēguse?          |
| I want to go          | hahtēs tēgusa             |
| we two want to go     | haksēs tētēnegusa         |
| we want to go         | pēhēgus tēpēgusa          |
| we two want to go out | weteshvtvnges tētēne'gusa |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| we want to go to the river             | warvgus pĕhĕgus tepĕgusa                      |
| I want to go and come back             | hahtes kawē'tvuv kalvsa'hgus tĕ'gusa          |
| this very day                          | (to go) (this very day)(to come back)(I want) |
| I went and came back                   | e'htene kvkv e'sahgu                          |
| we went and came back                  | peĕkune kvkv ē'pe sahgu                       |
| we want to go ( <i>or</i> , to be)     |   |
| about                                  | hvpekses tĕtĕne'gusa                          |
| we all want to go ( <i>or</i> , to be) |   |
| about                                  | lvtvse wĕ'hvkes tepĕgusa                      |
| many are sitting                       | kaku'ĕge tvluen                               |
| have you any?                          | nvcepv?                                       |
| I have                                 | nvceev.                                       |
| the girls all want books               | tvmar lvtvse nĕpĕgusa atul                    |
| I want to give to all wanting          |   |
| books                                  | lvtvsets nepegusa atul nagŭses tĕgusa         |
| he excels all                          | lvtvse pukeluse                               |
| to know                                | hvcoko'wes                                    |
| I know                                 | tacuka  |
| I do not know                          | estucoko                                      |
| know thou                              | pĕlccoko                                      |
| to cast away                           | mehvles                                       |
| cast (it) away (imp. sing.)            | mehpale                                       |
| cast (it) not away                     | mvkvmmehpv                                    |
| run thou                               | kwvrpĕsku                                     |
| run thou quickly                       | kwvrpĕsku somōp                               |
| go thou                                | pa'lite                                       |
| go you two                             | pa'kse  |
| go ye                                  | pĕpĕgu  |
| give to me                             | kvba'guce                                     |
| bring to me                            | hvbagece                                      |
| he died                                | kae'wete                                      |
| he fell down                           | mvkvce'ak                                     |
| let us all go and see it               | pĕĕguk lvtvsets erhvles tepĕgusa              |
|  | (going) (all) (to see) (we want)              |
| I am going                             | tahtva'                                       |
| to day I am going                      | kawet tahtva'                                 |
| now I am going                         | kawetvn tahtva'                               |
| we two want to go and come             | aksek kalvsa'hgus tĕtĕ nĕgusa                 |
| back this very day                     | (having gone) (to come back) (we two want)    |
|  | ka'wetvuv'                                    |
|  | (this very day)                               |
| having gone, he returned               | e'htene kv'kvkuno'wesku                       |
| many came (yesterday)                  | tvluen kvkvepe sa'hku                         |
| long ago they came                     | ĕlĕ'nĕĕn kvkv-supesahku                       |
| we two want to run                     | awe'nu kwvrhĕ'skus tĕtĕnĕ'gusa                |
| I don't want to be lost                | wvthokes ekusattaá                            |

|                              |                                       |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| he was lost                  | kawv'tege, or kawvtsugu               |
| we two don't want to be lost | awc'nu wvthykes ekusatvtvnea'         |
| I having gone, when you      |                                       |
| you come back, I again       |                                       |
| will go                      | pahtek kvbvsahkup tvgč'ha hmv maa'tek |
| I am he, or that one         | manv ta'v                             |
| you are he, or that one      | manv pvna'a                           |
| he is that one               | mana a                                |
| they are those               | manv pvmpeya                          |
| do you think it is he?       | mana a yepvuuvv ?                     |

It will be seen that many of the words in the above vocabulary are compounds. Thus wās, apparently a generic term for a certain class of animals, appears in the words wvs-tan cow, wvs tanenu calf, was tanem buffalo, wvs kup dog, was kv'lkul toad, wvs kup-se'l horse, and by elision of the last consonant in we nvtu cat (wvs e'ntu teeth?), and wč'le ant. I know of no such root in the Chahta-Māskōke dialects, but in the Yuche we have a similar series in the form wč, we-tenč cow, we-yu deer, we-eyu chicken, we-chaw hog, which latter seems the Natchez kweh-se'l hog (se'l the augmentative).

The termination kuyv seems to be similarly generic for edible vegetables, as ha/kuyv corn, yewe's kuyv pumpkin, yewes kvvap water-melon (compare yewes kmvtvk muskmelon).

U'wvh, fire, otherwise spelled wah, and oua, appears in kwahsep, wah sil or oua chil sun, kwa'hsep kvlap moon, wahiloolie G. hot, (from u'wvh, and luhu, place).

A'tv, foot, forms by addition at'vntchv heel, atwen'chev calf of the leg (wen' tchv, meat or flesh), atkahkv leg, popatse shoes.

Wihih earth, wih salt, and owih sugar, seem allied, the two latter substances probably being regarded as some kinds of earth.

The name of God given by Gallatin is evidently from heleksč'nēs breath, and is doubtless a translation of the Mas. E svketv emise, Master of Breath. My informants distinctly say the Nache contains no word for God, of native origin.

The accented é before words denoting parts of the body (see mouth, hand, hair, ear, teeth) occurs also in Mās., where it is usually translated *his*, or *the*, as impersonal. The terminal nesoo is also the possessive form from ne, he.

The words for thunder and lightning are distinctly onomatopoetic.

In several instances totally different words are given in the two vocabularies, as for arm, bird, boy, chief, night, etc. These doubtless express different but allied ideas.

There are but few plural forms. The word *toluen*, many, is generally used with the singular to form the plural, as *lekep toluen*. Diminutives

formed by adding *enu* (also a diminutive termination in Māskoke); and augmentatives by adding *se'l* are frequent.

Causative verbs are numerous, and are generally formed by the termination *hvlles* to the root. *Eple hvlles*, to hear, is probably thus formed from *epuk*, the ear. Adjectives and some possessive pronouns follow the low the words they qualify.

The numerals are remarkably simple, and testify to their independent construction in the language itself. The word for one, *we'tan*, *witahu*, G., seems allied to a Maskoke word sometimes used for first, *hvti-chiskv* (= *wūte-chiskv*).<sup>\*</sup> The latter again leads us to the Yuche *hetě*, one. The number two is merely this primitive repeated with a prefix, *a' wete*, probably *get one*, or one other, as the German *noch eins*. Three is the same root *eta*, with the prefix of the third person singular, *ne'de*, or *nay'etie*, G., he yet, *er noch*. Again, in the four, *tenv'wete*, we recognize the word two, *a'wete*, with the dual prefix *te* and a euphonic *n*, *te-nawete*, *tenv'wete*, literally, two twos. The five, *spē'de*, or *shpedee*, G., is evidently the palm of the hand held up to show the five fingers *ēspe'hsev*, *ispeshe*, G. (see the vocabulary). Seven, eight, and nine are clearly built up on the root *kwv*, thus *un'h kwv*, *v'p kwv tepes*, *wete'p kwv tepes*. This radical is common also to these three numbers in the *chetimacha*, *pakhu*, *tsi khuiau*, *tek khuian*, and the Attacapa eight and nine, *ku eta*, *ku icheta*. The ten *ogu*, *oku*, is possibly the Chok. *pokoli*, Mik. *pokoleu*, ten. Indeed, Dumont gives *pokole* as the Nache word for ten.

In instituting a comparison between the Nache and other tongues, the *Chahta-Māsköké* stem of languages, which included those spoken over most of the area between the Lower Mississippi and the Atlantic, naturally should first be examined. The principal dialects are the closely related Choctaw and Chikasaw on the one part, and the nearly equally closely related dialects of the Creek or Māskōke on the other, the latter embracing the main Creek or Maskoke proper, the *Hichita*, *Mikasukie*, and *Koösati*.

There are no published dictionaries of any of these tongues, and the vocabularies are by no means full. Besides the printed lists of words to be found in the writings of Gallatin, Buckingham Smith, Buckner, Robertson, Schoolcraft, and Byington, I have consulted various manuscript vocabularies, especially one of the several Maskoke dialects, obtained at my request by Mrs. A. E. W. Robertson. The dialects are referred to by their first syllables.

*Again*, *hvmu*—Mas. *svnv chumv*.

*Apple*, *vpesurer*, augmentative of *vpesur*, peach. The prefix *vpe* is the Choctaw affix *vpi*, applied to various kinds of fruit-trees, as *ot-vpi* chestnut tree, *fik vpi*, fig tree (Luk. xviii. 6).

Beans, *popkē*. Seminole, *popka*, wild peas.

Bed, *pé'thup*. Mas. *pvtakv*.

\* H. F. Buckner, Grammar of the Maskoke Lang. p. 28.

- Ball, puhshv. Mas. pukko.
- Bird, so'lko'l. Mas. su'li, a bird of the buzzard species, as fuchō-su'li, a buzzard duck.
- Blackberry, onu. Chok. vni, small fruit, berry.
- Boy, kypena'nu. Mas. chepvne; the termination enu is diminutive.
- Bread, pēhē'lu. Chok. paska. Mik. pvlvste.
- Blood, itsch. Hit. bitch-ikehee.
- Brother, kaka-nesha. Mik. chachaie (my).
- Deer, cha'. Mas. icho.
- Eye, oktul. Mās. tu'lvv.
- Flowers, kvhvēlu'se. Chok. pokauly.
- Fish, henn, G. Chok. nvni.
- Frog, ēchakst. Chok. shukvti.
- Girl, or young woman, ho'lv. Mik. hvlke.
- Good, sokoneu. Kos. kokanu.
- Hair, or leaves, toyu. Sem. tuisi, leaves.
- House, halit, G. Mas. ehati (his home).
- Large, lēkep. Mas. 'lokket.
- Lips, See mouth.
- Male, kypen'v. Mas. chepvne, boy.
- Many, tvlu'en. Mas. tvlkōs, it is all; tvlkekōs, it is not yet all, not only.
- Medicine, omv. Chok. vpol *uma*, a medicine man.
- Mouth, heche, G. Mik. eichi. Chet. cha. This is apparently the word for lips, e'hech'l.
- No, koo-shats, G. Mas. ka, or kō.
- Peach, vpesur. See Apple.
- Plum, aht-vpesur. See Peach.
- Potato, vehv. Mas. vhv.
- Pine tree, tsohl, G. Mas. chole.
- Sea, wa'lv. Mas. wv'lakko, from oewv water and 'lakko great. Kootshel, G. Chok. okhuta pond, with augmentative, sel.
- River, wa'lshe'l, Mas. wa'l with augment. sel. See Sea.
- Small, chekestauu. Mas. chetke (enu, the diminutive suffix). Chok. iskitinē.

Sour, kvyumhkuph. Mas. kvmüksi

Stars, tu'kul. Mas. vkolaswv

Sweet, chvkvlguph. Mas. chvmpe

Teeth, e'ntv. Mas. enütti, Mik. enote

Tobacco, hakshoo, G. Mik. akchvme'

“ pipe : from same root.

Tree, or wood, chuyv, tshoo, G. Probably allied to tsohl, Mas. chule, pine tree.

Wolf, uttuwah. Mas. yvhv

#### WORDS FROM EARLY FRENCH AUTHORS.

A very limited number of words are given in the early French writers. These I have collected and will examine.

Allouez, Watchers, guards; “leurs Gardes qu, on nomme Allouez,” Charlevoix, *Journal Historique*, p. 420. No doubt this is from e'lhvilles, to see, and hence to watch.

Athiocma, that is good, “cela est bon” (Dumont, *Memoire Historique sur la Louisiane*). This is obviously the Chahta achvkma, good.

Cahench, come (Du Pratz). Evidently from kahvsahkus, in the above vocabulary.

Chichicois, gourds used as rattles (Dumont, I, p. 193).

Choupichoul, a kind of grain, millet.

Coyocop, Spirit, Esprit (Du Pratz). With the affix se'l or cbil, great, the Great Spirit; prefixed to techou, or thecou, servants or inferiors, the common appellation of the inferior divinities (Du Pratz). Given in my vocabulary as the word for white man 'loyocop.

Coüy-oüy, the cardinal bird (Dumont).

Hoo! hoo! or hom! hom! An interjection of approval or assent (Du Pratz and Dumont). This is the same in Mäskoke (see Buckner, *Maské, ki Grammar*, p. 74).

Liquip, man or chief (Dumont). This is an error, as the word is clearly lēkep, great or large.

Miche-miche-quipy, an opprobrious name applied to the lowest caste (Du Pratz), called Puants or Stinkards. I suspect this is an Algonkin word, from the Shawnee miche, bad, mean, and que-essan boys, fellows. A miserable remnant of Shawnees were held as slaves by the Nache (Penicaut, *Annals*, p. 123). Moreover the author of the *Voyage à la Louisiane*, p. 33, says the native name is *olchagras*.

Nou-kou, or No-co, I do not know (Gravier, *Letter*, p. 142, and Du Pratz). Compare the vocabulary.

Oūa, fire ; oūa-chil, sun. These will readily be recognized.

Pocolē, two at a time, "en dix" (Dumont). This is the Mās. pokole, ten.

Tallabē, very many ; "il y en a tant que je ne puis plus les compter" (Dumont).

Tamail, woman or wife (Gravier, *Letter*, p. 141, and Du Pratz). Properly tvma'l.

Tecou, servants, inferiors ; ouchil-techou, servants of the Great Sun, employed to convey his orders to the various villages. They were two in number (Penicaut, *Annals*, p. 91).

Du Pratz gives the following examples of the difference between the dialects of the nobles and common people.

|                |   |               |                    |
|----------------|---|---------------|--------------------|
| Hark ye        | } | to a noble    | magani             |
|                |   | to a commoner | aqueuan            |
| Are you there? | } | to a noble    | apape-gouaiche     |
|                |   | to a commoner | taethite-cabanaete |
| Sit down       | } | to a noble    | cahan              |
|                |   | to a commoner | petchi             |

Of these, the first two are similar, except the prefix m. The last word is from hē'ches, to sit. The others are too uncertain in form to allow of identification.

The proper names preserved in various writers are few in number. I have noted the following :

Olabalkebiche, the Stung Serpent, le Serpent Piqué, the Great Sun, who died in 1725. The first portion of the name is vlv, serpent.

Oyelape, the White Earth, la Terre Blanche, name of a Sun. Given the full French sound we may suppose it formed of wilih earth and kahap white.

Ala ho fléchia, name of a chief (Richebourg, *La Première Guerre des Natchez*, p. 247).

Chinnabic, name of the "Great Natchez Warrior" in 1792 (*American State Papers, Indian Affairs*, Feb. 17, 1792).

Is-sa-laktih, name of the Chief of whom Mr. Gallatin obtained his vocabulary.

Jenzaque, the name of one of their villages (Dumont).

It is very evident from this examination, incomplete as it is, that the Nache is a dialect of the Māsokke or Creek, changed in various respects, with a small percentage of totally foreign roots, but distinctly recog-



nizable for all that. This conclusion is indeed the opinion of the Creeks themselves, as they told William Bartram,<sup>1</sup> nearly a century ago, that "the Natchez was a dialect of the Muscoulge," as he calls the Mäskoike. There is, further, no reason to doubt but that the great mass of the nation were of Mäskoike lineage. The only point in which they differed essentially from the tribes around them was in the despotic character of their rulers. Many other of the Chahta-Mäskoike tribes were nearly equally civilized. The Yasous, Coras, Offagoulas and Ouspie erected mounds and earthworks for their villages<sup>2</sup>, as, indeed, did most of the Creek tribes; the so-called "Temple" and the perpetual fire kept therein, were customs common throughout the Mäskoike country<sup>3</sup>; the Nache celebrated the feast of new corn just as the Creeks did, and, according to Du Pratz's description, with very similar ceremonies; while the title "Great Sun" was so far from a strange or unusual metaphor to apply to a chief that, for instance, the Delawares conferred it on Col. Daniel Broadhead in 1781<sup>4</sup>.

The body of roots wholly dissimilar from any I have been able to find in the Chahta-Mäskoike dialects, embraces a number of important words, and makes up a sufficiently large percentage of the language to testify positively to a potent foreign influence. In what direction we are to look in order to find analogies for them, and thus, perhaps, throw light on the origin of the despotic government of the Nache and some of their peculiar customs, I shall not at present discuss.

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## AN ACOUSTIC PHENOMENON IN THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS.

(*Read at the Meeting of the Philosophical Society, Nov. 7th, 1873.*)

On the eighth day of August, 1873, a party of four, ascended Bald Mountain, one of the loftiest summits of the Wahsatch Range, bounding Salt Lake valley on the east. It rises nearly four thousand feet above the Mining Camp of Alta, and over twelve thousand above the level of the sea. The shady gulches of the mountains were still patched with snow, around which acres of wild flowers during this, their tardy spring, were blooming in lavish profusion.

As its name imports, vegetation nearly ceases some hundreds of feet from the top of the mountain, partly owing to its extreme elevation, and partly to its destitution of soil. Its top had withered into a more or less spherical form, and was shingled with disintegrated shale—(about

1 *Travels through North and South Carolina, etc.*, p. 463.

2 De La Harpe, *Annals of Louisiana*, p. 106.

3 Interesting particulars respecting these customs are given by William Bartram in a MS. in the possession of the Penna. Historical Society.

4 Heckewelder, *Narrative of the Mission of the United Brethren among the Delaware and Mohegan Indians*, p. 218.